

We claim:

1. A method for managing electronic mail return receipts using audio-visual notification comprising the steps of:

initiating an electronic mail return receipt operation;

5 detecting a message at the receiver destination;

transmitting a return receipt back to the message initiator;

capturing the return receipt at the message initiator location;

identifying the specific receiver destination transmitting the return receipt;

displaying the specific receiver destination to the message initiator.

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2. The method as described in claim 1 further comprising before said message detecting step, determining the type of return receipt notification display.

3. The method as described in claim 1 further comprising before said return receipt transmitting step, the step of creating a queue at a receiver destination and queuing a return receipt notification in response to the detection of the opening of a message at the receiver destination.

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4. The method as described in claim 2 wherein said display type determination step further comprises prompting the message initiator to select a return receipt notification display procedure.

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5. The method as described in claim 4 wherein the return receipt notification display procedure comprises highlighting a recipient of the message at the message initiator location when a recipient has received and opened the message.

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6. The method as described in claim 4 wherein the return receipt notification display procedure comprises creating a list of recipients of the original message at the message initiator location and indicating when a recipient from the recipient list has received and opened the message.

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7. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said return receipt capturing step further comprises:

intercepting an incoming message at the message initiator location;

determining whether the detected message is message disposition notification;

5 when the determination is the detected message is a message disposition notification, identifying the original message at the message initiator location; and

matching the sender of the message disposition notification to a corresponding recipient on the original message transmitted by the message initiator.

10 8. The message as described in claim 7 further comprising before said matching step, the step of determining whether the original transmitted message had multiple recipients.

9. A method for managing electronic mail return receipts using audio-visual
15 notification comprising the steps of:

detecting a received message;

routing a return receipt back to the message initiator;

capturing an incoming message at the message initiator location;

identifying the corresponding originally transmitted message;

20 matching the return receipt with a recipient from the originally transmitted message.

10. The method as described in claim 9 further comprising after said message capturing step, the step of determining whether the captured message is a message
25 disposition notification.

11. The method as described in claim 9 further comprising after said identifying step, the step of determining whether the determining whether the original transmitted message had multiple recipients.

12. The method as described in claim 9 further comprising the step of displaying the return receipt to the original message initiator.

13. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for managing electronic mail return receipts using audio-visual notification comprising:

instructions for initiating an electronic mail return receipt operation;

instructions for detecting a message at the receiver destination;

instructions for transmitting a return receipt back to the message initiator;

instructions for capturing the return receipt at the message initiator location;

instructions for identifying the specific receiver destination transmitting the return receipt;

instructions for displaying the specific receiver destination to the message initiator.

14. The computer program product as described in claim 13 further comprising before said message detecting instructions, instructions for determining the type of return receipt notification display.

15. The computer program product as described in claim 12 further comprising before said return receipt transmitting instructions, instructions for creating a queue at a receiver destination and instructions for queuing a return receipt notification in response to the detection of the opening of a message at the receiver destination.

16. The computer program product as described in claim 14 wherein said display type determination instructions further comprise instructions for prompting the message initiator to select a return receipt notification display procedure.

17. The computer program product as described in claim 16 wherein the return receipt notification display procedure comprises instructions for highlighting a recipient of the message at the message initiator location when a recipient has received and opened the message.

18. The computer program product as described in claim 16 wherein the return receipt notification display procedure comprises instructions for creating a list of recipients of the original message at the message initiator location and instructions for indicating when a recipient from the recipient list has received and opened the message.

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19. The computer program product as described in claim 13 wherein said return receipt capturing instructions further comprise:

instructions for intercepting an incoming message at the message initiator location;

10 instructions for determining whether the detected message is message disposition notification;

when the determination is the detected message is a message disposition notification, instructions for identifying the original message at the message initiator location; and

15 instructions for matching the sender of the message disposition notification to a corresponding recipient on the original message transmitted by the message initiator.

20. The computer program product as described in claim 19 further comprising before said matching instruction, instructions for determining whether the original transmitted
20 message had multiple recipients.

21. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for managing electronic mail return receipts using audio-visual notification comprising:

instructions for detecting a received message;

25 instructions for routing a return receipt back to the message initiator;

instructions for capturing an incoming message at the message initiator location;

instructions for identifying the corresponding originally transmitted message;

instructions for matching the return receipt with a recipient from the originally transmitted message.

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22. The computer program product as described in claim 21 further comprising after said message capturing instruction, instructions for determining whether the captured message is a message disposition notification.

5 23. The computer program product as described in claim 21 further comprising after said identifying instructions, instructions for determining whether the determining whether the original transmitted message had multiple recipients.

10 24. The computer program product as described in claim 21 further comprising instructions for displaying the return receipt to the original message initiator.